

# MONTANA STANDARDS FOR SPEAKING AND LISTENING

*Oral communication is the bridge to the future. It provides the basis of language development, thinking, gathering information, and shaping how we see ourselves and how others see us. Studies show that over 80 percent of communication is spent in speaking and listening, which lends credence to the belief that teaching these skills is not just desirable, but critical. It is the responsibility of education to ensure that students are prepared for their roles as family members, workers, and citizens through oral communication instruction.*

*The National Communication Association defines speaking as “the uniquely human act or process of transmitting and exchanging information, ideas, and emotions using oral language” while listening is “the process of receiving, constructing meaning from, and responding to spoken and/or nonverbal messages.”*

Content Standards indicate what all students should know, understand and be able to do in a specific content area.

Benchmarks define our expectations for students’ knowledge, skills, and abilities along a developmental continuum in each content area. That continuum is focused at three points—the end of grade 4, the end of grade 8 and grade 12.

**Speaking and Listening Content Standard 1—Students demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the communication process.**

**Speaking and Listening Content Standard 2—Students distinguish among and use appropriate types of speaking and listening for a variety of purposes.**

**Speaking and Listening Content Standard 3—Students apply a range of skills and strategies to speaking and listening.**

**Speaking and Listening Content Standard 4—Students identify, analyze, and evaluate the impacts of effective speaking and evaluative listening.**

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## Speaking and Listening Content Standard 1

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**Students demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the communication process.**

### **Rationale**

*Skills needed in communicating begins with a knowledge of communication as a process made up of multiple components which include message, sender, receiver, shared experiences, channel, feedback, and interference. The sender puts ideas into verbal and nonverbal symbols that are transmitted to the receiver through channels. The receiver interprets the message and reacts to it by providing feedback. Unless the experiences and vocabulary of sender and receiver are similar, the effective exchange of ideas is difficult. At any point in this process, interference can prevent intended meanings from being accurately shared.*

### **Benchmarks**

**Students will:**

End of Grade 4	End of Grade 8	Upon Graduation—End of Grade 12
<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. recognize the important role of speaking and listening in daily life.</li><li>2. identify oneself in various roles in the communication process and recognize the shared communication responsibilities of the speaker and the listener.</li></ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. observe and describe the importance of speaking and listening in personal relationships.</li><li>2. identify and define the components of the communication process.</li></ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. explain the importance of effective oral communication in creating meaning, influencing thought, and making decisions.</li><li>2. identify and analyze the relationships among the components of the communication process.</li></ol>

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## Speaking and Listening Content Standard 2

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**Students distinguish among and use appropriate types of speaking and listening for a variety of purposes.**

### **Rationale**

*Everyday people must make decisions about the purpose of communication: will it be to exchange information, entertain or inspire, persuade, or solve problems? They must choose appropriate methods of communicating effectively with different types of audiences, whether favorable, hostile, or neutral, as well as with different audience sizes in conversation, small group, and public or mass. Delivery choice must also fit the presentation. It may be impromptu, extemporaneous, manuscript, or memorized delivery with or without audio and/or visual aids. Likewise, different types of listening, such as casual, appreciative, attentive, interpretive, critical and empathic are needed to different purposes and situations.*

### **Benchmarks**

Students will:

End of Grade 4	End of Grade 8	Upon Graduation—End of Grade 12
<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. recognize the techniques of listening in a variety of situations (e.g., focusing attention, reflecting, interpreting, analyzing, responding to messages).</li><li>2. demonstrate appropriate speaking and listening behaviors in communicating with peers and others in formal and informal classroom situations.</li><li>3. speak and listen effectively for a range of purposes (e.g., reading aloud and listening to oral readings, sharing and listening to personal experiences, presenting and listening to oral reports, clearly giving and understanding directions and instructions).</li><li>4. identify and appropriately use different types of presentations (e.g., storytelling, narrative, description).</li><li>5. identify and use different types of listening appropriate to the listening situation (e.g., casual, appreciative, attentive).</li></ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. analyze one's own techniques of listening in a variety of situations (e.g., focusing attention, reflecting, interpreting, analyzing, responding to messages).</li><li>2. demonstrate appropriate speaking and listening behaviors in communicating with various audiences.</li><li>3. speak and listen effectively for an expanded range of purposes (e.g., giving and understanding information, presenting and appreciating creative performances, delivering and analyzing persuasive messages).</li><li>4. identify and appropriately use different types of presentations (e.g., reports, expository speeches, dramatic presentations, persuasive appeals).</li><li>5. identify and use different types of listening appropriate to the listening situation (e.g., interpretive and empathic listening).</li></ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. explain, apply, and evaluate one's own and others' techniques of listening in a variety of situations (e.g., focusing attention, reflecting, interpreting, analyzing, responding to messages).</li><li>2. demonstrate effective adjustment of speaking and listening behaviors in communicating with various audiences.</li><li>3. speak and listen effectively for a broad range of purposes (e.g., delivering and evaluating entertaining or inspiring messages, presenting and critically evaluating problems and solutions).</li><li>4. identify and use different types of presentations appropriate to the purpose for speaking (e.g., impromptu, extemporaneous, manuscript, memorized deliveries, interpersonal endeavors).</li><li>5. identify and use different types of listening appropriate to the listening situation (e.g., critical listening).</li></ol>

## Speaking and Listening Content Standard 3

**Students apply a range of skills and strategies to speaking and listening.**

### Rationale

*Speakers carefully select a topic organization, development, language, and delivery techniques appropriate to the audience and situation.*

*Listeners choose strategies to draw connections as they monitor understanding, evaluate information, enhance aesthetic experiences, and overcome listening barriers. Good listening is active, learned, and developed through practice.*

### Benchmarks

Students will:

End of Grade 4	End of Grade 8	Upon Graduation—End of Grade 12
1. communicate in a focused and organized manner.	1. communicate with a clear purpose, well-developed organization, and support from a variety of sources.	1. communicate with an identifiable thesis, logically developed points with appropriate supporting resources, and clear sequencing of ideas and transitions.
2. select and use appropriate verbal language to convey intended meaning.	2. use verbal language appropriate to occasion, audience, and topic.	2. use informal, standard, and technical verbal language effectively to fit the purpose, audience, occasion and task.
3. identify and begin to use appropriate verbal and nonverbal skills to enhance presentations and manage communication anxiety.	3. explain and appropriately use verbal and nonverbal skills to enhance presentations and manage communication anxiety.	3. apply, analyze and evaluate effective verbal and nonverbal skills to enhance presentations and manage communication anxiety.
4. monitor understanding by identifying and using strategies (e.g., asking relevant questions and restating information).	4. monitor understanding by identifying and using strategies (e.g., inquiring, taking notes, summarizing oral and visual clues).	4. monitor understanding by identifying and using strategies (e.g., asking probing questions, paraphrasing, interpreting, evaluating oral and visual clues).
5. distinguish new from familiar material, significant from insignificant information, fact from opinion, and fantasy from reality.	5. distinguish information from persuasion, and logic from emotion.	5. recognize and analyze points of view, purposes, emotional appeals, and logical fallacies in verbal and nonverbal messages.
6. draw connections between one's experiences, information, and insights, and experiences communicated by others.	6. compare and contrast one's own experiences, information, and insights with the message received in a variety of communication situations.	6. compare and contrast one's experiences, information, and insights with the message in a variety of communication situations.
7. identify characteristics of enjoyable listening experiences by examining rhythm in music and visualization of images.	7. compare and contrast enjoyable listening experiences by examining different renditions of the same work (e.g., the same selection interpreted by different performers).	7. analyze and evaluate aesthetic listening experiences by examining speakers' style, interpreting characters in a dialogue, and studying the projection of emotion.
8. identify, anticipate, and manage barriers to listening.	8. identify, anticipate, and manage barriers to listening.	8. identify, anticipate, and manage barriers to listening.

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## Speaking and Listening Content Standard 4

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**Students identify, analyze, and evaluate the impacts of effective speaking and evaluative listening.**

### **Rationale**

*After speaking or listening, students need to evaluate the completed communication process to identify successful and less successful strategies, incorporate the successful techniques in their own communication, and reflect on the impact the communication had on others. Training in speaking and listening cultivates respect for the feelings and values of others while increasing awareness of the ethical responsibilities inherent in communication. In a global village in the information age, it is imperative for all students to be competent, informed, and sensitive oral communicators.*

### **Benchmarks**

Students will:

End of Grade 4	End of Grade 8	Upon Graduation—End of Grade 12
<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. identify the characteristics of effective speaking and listening.</li><li>2. reflect on one's effectiveness as speakers and as listeners, and set personal goals.</li><li>3. show respect for the feelings and values of others when speaking and listening.</li></ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. analyze and apply the characteristics of effective speaking and evaluative listening.</li><li>2. use feedback to evaluate one's own effectiveness as a speaker and as a listener, and set personal goals.</li><li>3. explain the importance of speaking and listening in our democratic society within a culturally diverse world.</li></ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. analyze the characteristics and evaluate the impact of informative, persuasive, and artistic presentations of self, peers, public figures, and the media.</li><li>2. use feedback to evaluate one's own effectiveness as a speaker and as a listener, and set personal goals.</li><li>3. analyze the legal and ethical issues associated with responsible communication.</li></ol>

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## Speaking and Listening Performance Standards

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The Speaking and Listening Performance Standards describe students' knowledge, skills, and abilities in the speaking and listening content area on a continuum from kindergarten through grade 12. These descriptions provide a picture or profile of student achievement at four performance levels: advanced, proficient, nearing proficiency and novice.

**Advanced:** This level denotes superior performance.

**Proficient:** This level denotes solid academic performance for each benchmark. Students reaching this level have demonstrated competency over challenging subject matter, including subject-matter knowledge, application of such knowledge to real-world situations, and analytical skills appropriate to the subject matter.

**Nearing Proficiency:** This level denotes that the student has partial mastery or prerequisite knowledge and skills fundamental for proficient work at each benchmark.

**Novice:** This level denotes that the student is beginning to attain the prerequisite knowledge and skills that are fundamental for work at each benchmark.

### **Grade 4 Speaking and Listening**

**Advanced:** (1) A fourth-grade student at the advanced level of speaking and listening demonstrates superior performance. He/she:

- (a) displays an extensive understanding of the importance of one's roles and responsibilities when speaking and listening in daily life;
- (b) effectively uses appropriate speaking and listening behaviors in the classroom during oral readings, directions, and sharing personal experiences;
- (c) applies a range of speaking skills and strategies (e.g., clear focus, organization, delivery);
- (d) fluently applies a range of skills and strategies (e.g., questioning, restating, distinguishing types of information, drawing connections to oneself);
- (e) effectively examines the characteristics of enjoyable listening experiences;
- (f) consistently identifies characteristics of effective speaking and listening and appropriately modifies own behavior; and
- (g) shows respect for the feelings and values of others when speaking and listening.

**Proficient:** (1) A fourth-grade student at the proficient level in speaking and listening demonstrates solid academic performance. He/she:

- (a) recognizes the importance of one's roles and responsibilities when speaking and listening in daily life;
- (b) uses appropriate speaking and listening behaviors in the classroom during oral readings, directions, and sharing personal experiences;
- (c) applies a range of speaking skills and strategies (e.g., clear focus, organization, delivery);
- (d) applies a range of speaking skills and strategies (e.g., questioning, restating, distinguishing types of information, drawing connections to oneself);
- (e) examines the characteristics of enjoyable listening experiences;
- (f) identifies characteristics of effective speaking and listening and appropriately modifies own communication behavior; and
- (g) shows respect for the feelings and values of others when speaking and listening.

**Nearing Proficiency:** (1) A fourth-grade student at the nearing proficiency level in speaking and listening demonstrates partial mastery of prerequisite skills and knowledge fundamental for proficient speaking and listening. He/she:

- (a) sometimes recognizes the importance of one's roles and responsibilities when speaking and listening in daily life;
- (b) sometimes uses appropriate speaking and listening behaviors in the classroom during oral readings, directions, and sharing personal experiences;
- (c) applies a limited range of speaking skills and strategies, but is not always focused, organized, or clear in delivery;
- (d) applies a limited range of listening skills and strategies, but is not always effective in questioning, restating, distinguishing types of information, or drawing connections to one's experiences;
- (e) enjoys some listening and is beginning to identify the characteristics of enjoyable listening experiences;
- (f) begins to identify the characteristics of effective speaking and listening, but infrequently modifies communication behavior; and
- (g) shows some respect for the feelings and values of others when speaking and listening.

**Novice:** (1) A fourth-grade student at the novice level in speaking and listening is beginning to attain prerequisite knowledge and skills that are fundamental at each benchmark in speaking and listening. He/she:

- (a) is beginning to recognize the importance of one's roles and responsibilities when speaking and listening in daily life;
- (b) seldom uses appropriate speaking and listening behaviors in the classroom during oral readings, directions, and sharing personal experiences;
- (c) sometimes applies a limited range of speaking skills and strategies, but is seldom focused, organized, or clear in delivery;
- (d) sometimes applies a limited range of listening skills and strategies, but has difficulty questioning, restating, distinguishing types of information, or drawing connections to one's experiences;
- (e) enjoys some listening experiences, but has difficulty identifying the characteristics of the presentations;
- (f) identifies a limited number of the characteristics of effective speaking and listening, and shows a limited ability to modify communication behavior; and
- (g) shows little respect for the feelings and values of others when speaking and listening.

### **Grade 8 Speaking and Listening**

**Advanced:** (1) An eighth-grade student at the advanced level of speaking and listening demonstrates superior performance. He/she:

- (a) displays extensive understanding of communication as an important process and communicates easily to develop and maintain personal relationships.
- (b) effectively chooses appropriate types of speaking and listening for a variety of purposes;
- (c) uses a complex range of speaking skills and strategies (e.g., a clear purpose, controlled organization, varied support, appropriate language);
- (d) uses a complex range of listening skills and strategies (e.g., inquiry, note taking, summarizing), while distinguishing between information and opinion, and relating messages to one's experiences;
- (e) thoughtfully compares and contrasts enjoyable listening experiences;
- (f) analyzes communication impacts and effectively modifies speaking and listening behaviors; and
- (g) displays extensive understanding of the complexity of communication in our democratic society within a culturally diverse world.

**Proficient:** (1) An eighth-grade student at the proficient level of speaking and listening demonstrates solid academic performance. He/she:

- (a) describes speaking and listening as important processes, and uses communication to develop and maintain personal relationships;
- (b) recognizes and applies appropriate types of speaking and listening for a variety of purposes;
- (c) applies a range of speaking skills and strategies (e.g., a clear purpose, controlled organization, varied support, appropriate language);
- (d) applies a range of listening skills and strategies (e.g., inquiry, note taking, summarizing), while distinguishing between information and opinion, and relating messages to one's experiences;

- (e) compares and contrasts enjoyable listening experiences;
- (f) analyzes communication impacts and selects modifications to speaking and listening behaviors; and
- (g) consistently identifies and describes the importance of communication in our democratic society within a culturally diverse world.

**Nearing Proficiency:** (1) An eighth-grade student at the nearing proficiency level in speaking and listening demonstrates a partial mastery of prerequisite knowledge and skills fundamental for proficient speaking and listening. He/she:

- (a) sometimes recognizes speaking and listening as important processes and uses communication, with assistance, to develop and maintain personal relationships;
- (b) sometimes recognizes and applies, with assistance, appropriate types of speaking and listening for a variety of purposes;
- (c) sometimes applies a range of speaking skills and strategies (e.g., a clear purpose, controlled organization, varied support, appropriate language);
- (d) sometimes applies a range of listening skills and strategies (e.g., inquiry, note taking, summarizing), and has difficulty distinguishing between information and opinion, and relating messages to one's experiences;
- (e) contrasts, but seldom compares enjoyable listening experiences;
- (f) sometimes identifies communication impacts, but has difficulty modifying speaking and listening behaviors; and
- (g) has limited recognition of the importance of communication in our democratic society within a culturally diverse world.

**Novice:** (1) An eighth-grade student at the novice level in speaking and listening is beginning to attain prerequisite knowledge and skills that are fundamental at each benchmark for speaking and listening. He/she:

- (a) seldom recognizes speaking and listening as important processes and has difficulty communicating to develop and maintain personal relationships;
- (b) recognizes and applies appropriate types of speaking and listening for limited purposes;
- (c) applies a limited range of speaking skills and strategies (e.g., a clear purpose, controlled organization, varied support, appropriate language);
- (d) applies a limited range of listening skills and strategies (e.g., inquiry, note taking, summarizing), and has difficulty distinguishing between information and opinion, and relating messages to one's experiences);
- (e) recognizes the obvious, but incompletely contrasts and seldom compares aesthetic listening experiences;
- (f) is beginning to understand communication impacts, and selects limited modifications to speaking and listening behaviors; and
- (g) has limited understanding of the importance of communication in our democratic society within a culturally diverse world.

### **Upon Graduation Speaking and Listening**

**Advanced:** (1) A graduating student at the advanced level of speaking/listening demonstrates superior performance. He/she:

- (a) displays extensive understanding of speaking and listening as important processes used to create meaning and influence thought and decision-making;
- (b) effectively distinguishes and chooses among appropriate types of speaking and listening used by self and others for a variety of audiences, purposes, and situations;
- (c) effectively applies speaking skills and strategies, creating a well-organized and thoroughly developed message using appropriate verbal and nonverbal language;
- (d) effectively applies listening skills and strategies (e.g., monitoring understanding, recognizing, and analyzing logical and emotional appeals, making personal associations with the message);
- (e) thoroughly and effectively interprets appreciative listening experiences by analyzing and evaluating characteristics of the presentation;
- (f) thoroughly analyzes, and evaluates the impact of presentations on self and others, using feedback to adjust speaking and listening behaviors; and
- (g) consistently demonstrates sensitivity to the legal and ethical issues associated with communication.



**Proficient:** (1) A graduating student at the proficient speaking and listening level demonstrates solid academic performance. He/she:

- (a) displays understanding of speaking and listening as important processes that create meaning and influence thought and decision-making;
- (b) makes reasonable distinctions and chooses among appropriate types of speaking and listening used by self and others for a variety of audiences, purposes, and situations;
- (c) applies a range of speaking skills and strategies, creating an organized and completely developed message using appropriate verbal and nonverbal language;
- (d) applies a range of listening skills and strategies (e.g., monitoring understanding, recognizing and analyzing logical and emotional appeals, making personal associations with the message);
- (e) often interprets appreciative listening experiences by analyzing and evaluating characteristics of the presentation;
- (f) almost always identifies, analyzes, and evaluates the impact of presentations on self and others, using feedback to adjust speaking and listening behaviors; and
- (g) consistently demonstrates sensitivity to the legal and ethical issues associated with communication.

**Nearing Proficiency:** (1) A graduating student at the nearing proficiency level in speaking and listening demonstrates partial mastery of prerequisite knowledge and skills fundamental for proficient speaking and listening. He/she:

- (a) often recognizes speaking and listening as important processes that create meaning and influence thought and decision-making;
- (b) sometimes distinguishes and chooses among appropriate types of speaking and listening used by self and others, but needs assistance to choose appropriate type for audiences, purposes, and situations;
- (c) sometimes applies a range of speaking skills and strategies, and creates, with assistance, an organized message using appropriate verbal and nonverbal language;
- (d) sometimes applies a range of listening skills and strategies (e.g., monitoring understanding, recognizing and analyzing logical and emotional appeals, making personal associations with the message);
- (e) describes appreciative listening experiences with minimal analysis and evaluation of the presentation;
- (f) sometimes identifies and analyzes the impact of presentations on self and others, but needs assistance to use feedback to adjust speaking and listening behaviors; and
- (g) demonstrates limited sensitivity to the legal and ethical issues associated with communication.

**Novice:** (1) A graduating student at the novice level in speaking and listening is beginning to attain prerequisite knowledge and skills that are fundamental at each benchmark for speaking and listening. He/she:

- (a) sometimes recognizes speaking and listening as important processes that create meaning and influence thought and decision-making;
- (b) seldom distinguishes among appropriate types of speaking and listening for a limited range of audiences, purposes, and situations;
- (c) applies a limited range of speaking skills and strategies, but has difficulty, even with assistance, creating an organized and developed message using appropriate verbal and nonverbal language;
- (d) applies a limited range of listening skills and strategies (e.g., monitoring understanding, recognizing and analyzing logical and emotional appeals, making personal associations with the message);
- (e) begins to describe appreciative listening experiences by analyzing, with assistance, the presentation;
- (f) identifies and analyzes, with assistance, the impact of presentations on self and others, but seldom uses feedback to adjust speaking and listening behaviors; and
- (g) begins to demonstrate some sensitivity to the legal and ethical issues associated with communication.